



Peer-Review Report Form

Manuscript Title:	Reward Systems Used by BEEd Pre-Service Teachers and their Observed Level of Pupil Engagement
Type of Article:	Original Article

FIRST ROUND

Editor

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The reviewers acknowledge the significance of your manuscript and recommend several revisions to further improve its clarity, coherence, organization, and overall scholarly quality. In addition, you are advised to thoroughly review and validate all references included in the manuscript. Please ensure that all cited sources are accurate, accessible, and retrievable through Google Scholar to uphold the credibility and reliability of the study. Additionally, make sure to include the DOI or website link for every reference whenever available to facilitate verification and accessibility of sources. Furthermore, only sources that are cited within the manuscript should appear in the References section, and all entries listed in the References section must also be cited in the text. For example, if 20 unique sources are cited in the manuscript, then only those 20 sources should be included in the References section. Please note that repeated citations of the same source within the text are counted as a single reference entry; therefore, the total number of references may be lower than the total number of in-text citations.

Reviewer 1

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
Overall, reading this paper was very interesting. The topic focusing on pre-service teachers and their use of reinforcement is quite relevant for current educational practices. I appreciate the clear structure and the effort the authors put into gathering and organizing the literature. The theoretical background using behaviorist principles is also well integrated.

<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
Title and Abstract The title explicitly states observed level of pupil engagement. This is highly misleading. According to the methodology, the researchers never actually observed the pupils; they merely sent a Google Form to 30 pre-service teachers. Because the data relies entirely on the teachers assessing their own classrooms, the title should be changed to reflect teacher perceptions of pupil engagement.
Methodology



The study selected exactly 30 respondents using purposive sampling. Using only 30 participants is extremely small for running a reliable Pearson Product-Moment Correlation. With such a small sample, the statistical power is very low, meaning the study is almost guaranteed to find no significant relationship. The researchers need to add a dedicated limitations section in the paper to honestly discuss how this small sample size affects the reliability of their correlational findings.

Results and Discussion

Please check the data entry for Table 3. The row for certificates shows 20 for strongly disagree, but the formatting seems broken and missing some middle data points before showing the rank. The paper reports very weak correlations, such as an r of 0.094 and a p -value of 0.62 for tangible rewards and engagement. The authors spend a lot of time discussing this lack of relationship as if it proves that rewards do not impact engagement. The discussion must be rewritten to acknowledge that the non-significant p -values might simply be a Type II error caused by having only 30 respondents. The text in the results section is a bit too repetitive. It often just repeats the exact numbers from the tables without adding new, deep pedagogical insights. Try to synthesize the findings more naturally.

Conclusion

The conclusion strongly claims that reward systems do not significantly determine or predict pupil engagement. This is too bold of a statement. A survey of 30 teachers cannot definitively prove this for the wider educational field. The authors must soften their conclusion. They should state that within this specific, limited sample, no significant relationship was found, and they must recommend future studies with larger sample sizes and direct classroom observation.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers' comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

Reviewer 2

<u>General Comments and Recommendations</u>
The manuscript addresses a relevant classroom issue, especially for pre-service teachers handling elementary pupils. The topic has practical value, but the paper needs stronger methodological clarity and more careful interpretation of the findings, especially because the correlation results do not support some of the broader claims made in the discussion and conclusion.
<u>Specific Comments and Recommendations</u>
The study is described as examining the "effectiveness" and "impact" of reward systems, but the design is descriptive-correlational. This design can only describe patterns and relationships,



not prove effectiveness or impact. The authors should revise the wording of the objectives, discussion, and conclusion to avoid causal claims.

There is a concern about how pupil engagement was measured. The title and abstract suggest an “observed level” of engagement, but the methodology shows that data were gathered through a questionnaire answered by pre-service teachers. The authors should clarify whether engagement was actually observed or only reported by the respondents. This matters because self-report data may not fully reflect actual pupil behavior.

The sample size of 30 purposively selected respondents is quite small for correlation analysis. This may limit the ability of the study to detect meaningful relationships. The authors should acknowledge this more clearly as a limitation and avoid making broad conclusions from the non-significant results.

Some tables appear to have inconsistencies in the values, descriptions, and interpretations. For example, some mean scores and verbal descriptions do not seem to match the rating scale. These errors affect confidence in the results and should be carefully checked before finalizing the manuscript.

The discussion still gives the impression that reward systems are strongly linked with pupil engagement, although the correlation results are very weak and not significant. The authors should make the discussion more balanced by emphasizing that reward systems were commonly used and positively perceived, but were not statistically related to engagement in this study.

The instrument was adapted and modified, but the paper gives limited information on its reliability. Since the study depends heavily on questionnaire data, the authors should report reliability results, such as Cronbach’s alpha, for the main scales. This will help show that the instrument was suitable for measuring the variables.

Please indicate your recommendation by checking the appropriate box below.

<u>Decision</u>	
	Accept the manuscript for publication.
/	Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers’ comments and recommendations.
	Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.

SECOND ROUND

<u>Decision</u>	<u>Editor</u>	<u>Reviewer 1</u>	<u>Reviewer 2</u>
Accept the manuscript for publication.	/	/	/
Reconsider the manuscript after the authors have satisfactorily addressed and complied with the reviewers’ comments and recommendations.			
Reject the manuscript, as it is not suitable for publication.			